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An Analysis of the Optimum Learning in Regular Classrooms Project in Charleston, Illinois

Patricia Tucker Chaney
Eastern Illinois University

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An Analysis of the Optimum Learning In Regular

Classrooms Project in Charleston, Illinois

(ME)

BY

Patricia Tucker Chaney

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Specialist in Education

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1977

YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING
THIS PART OF THE GRADUATE DEGREE CITED ABOVE

July 8, 1977
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**AN ANALYSIS OF THE OPTIMUM LEARNING IN REGULAR
CLASSROOMS PROJECT IN CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS**

BY

PATRICIA TUCKER CHANEY

B. S. in Ed., Eastern Illinois University, 1968

M. S. in LS, Eastern Illinois University, 1972

ABSTRACT OF A FIELD STUDY

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Specialist in Education at the Graduate School
of Eastern Illinois University**

CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1977

The Optimum Learning in Regular Classrooms Project is an adoptive-adaptive ESEA Title IV-C project with two purposes: (1) to provide more effective educational service to children with special needs through training the mainstream teacher to diagnose these special needs as well as implement solutions for such children on an on-going basis, and (2) to provide more efficient support services to the mainstream teacher in his/her efforts to meet the special needs of exceptional children, whether handicapped or gifted.

Four main aspects of the project are examined:

Classroom organization. All classrooms were organized at least in part into learning centers. This provides a classroom structure which frees teachers to diagnose special needs as well as work individually and in small groups with students having these special needs.

Diagnoses and prescriptions for children with special needs. Formal and informal testing and observation on the part of teachers and support personnel were used to diagnose special needs. Following this, individual prescriptions consisting of strength and weakness profiles, objectives, methods and outcomes were designed to provide for these special needs for each exceptional child on prescription.

Support personnel. A number of specialists were used to help teachers

in planning and implementing their programs for special students. These included learning disabilities teachers, the project coordinator, speech clinicians, the school psychologist, personnel from the local mental health facility, and a consultant for gifted students.

Parent participation. Parent participation had two aspects: (1) that of including parents in conferences upon which prescriptions were based, and (2) that of using parent volunteer help for a variety of activities such as tutoring, checking papers, and preparing materials for student use.

The project seems to have well met its objectives. It has encouraged a number of teachers in the district to make some major changes in their teaching methods so that they can better help exceptional children. It has provided these teachers with the training and support expertise to better diagnose these children's special needs as well as design effective learning experiences especially prepared to help them.

The recommendation made is that all major aspects of the project can successfully be implemented in other buildings by teachers and administrators willing to spend the time and effort to provide more effective learning programs for children with special needs.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Optimum Learning in Regular Classrooms Project in Charleston was a federally funded project supported by ESEA Title IV-C funds during the 1976-77 school year. It proposed to adopt the program of the FAST (Functional Analysis Systems Training) Project and adapt it to the needs of the local district. Project FAST was developed in Essexville, Michigan, through ESEA Title III funding during 1971-1975. It has been nationally validated and is currently a part of the National Diffusion Network.

The local OLRC Project, which was implemented by eight teachers in Mark Twain and Lincoln Elementary Schools, had two major tasks: "(1) to provide more effective educational service to children with special needs, through systematically training the mainstream teacher to become aware of the totality of a given child and to implement solutions to that child's problems on an ongoing basis, and (2) to provide more efficient delivery of support services to the mainstream teacher in his/her efforts to meet the special needs of exceptional children, whether handicapped or gifted."¹ Project implementa-

¹"Optimum Learning In Regular Classrooms." Proposal for Title IV Part C. (unpublished paper, Charleston Community Unit District #1, 1976), p. 9.

tion is based on the premise that children with special needs can best be helped within the confines of the regular classroom, and that a classroom teacher, with the help of outside support expertise, can be trained to effectively diagnose special needs as well as provide educational experiences for special children that can fulfill these needs in the classroom itself instead of separating such children from their peers.

This paper intends to explore various aspects of the OLRC Project as it was implemented, and to determine which parts of it can be easily adapted to other schools. Areas of exploration will include the following:

Classroom organization. All classrooms involved in the project were organized at least in part into learning centers. This type of organization is central to the project because it provides a classroom structure which frees teachers to diagnose special needs as well as work with students showing these special needs without sending them outside the classroom.

Diagnoses and prescriptions for children with special needs. Formal and informal testing and observation on the part of classroom teachers and support personnel were used to diagnose special needs. Then elaborate prescriptions were designed to provide for these special needs within the regular classrooms.

Support personnel. A number of specialists were used to help teachers in planning and implementing their programs for special students. These included learning disabilities teachers, the project

coordinator, speech clinicians, the school psychologist, personnel from the local mental health facility, and a consultant for gifted students.

Parent participation. Parent participation had two aspects:

(1) that of including parents in conferences upon which prescriptions were based, and (2) that of using parent volunteer help for a variety of activities such as tutoring, checking papers, and preparing materials for student use within the classrooms.

Evaluation. This evaluation will include the results of the formal evaluation prepared by the project coordinator as well as an informal evaluation consisting of reactions to the project solicited from students and teachers involved.

Application of the project to other grade levels and for other schools. This will include two parts: (1) adoption of the project at the intermediate level (all OLRC Project classrooms that actively participated were primary level), and (2) an analysis of which aspects of the OLRC Project can be easily implemented in other school buildings.

II. LOG OF ACTIVITIES

The following is a listing of activities in which the writer participated during the field study.

- 2/4/77 Met with June Bouknight, principal of the two schools involved in the project to discuss the general nature of the project and the possibilities for ways to explore it in a field study.
- 2/22/77 Met with the project coordinator, Sandy Baker, to discuss various aspects of the OLRC Project in order to prepare the prospectus for the field study paper and to gain an overall view of the project.
- 3/3/77 Attended an inservice meeting at Mark Twain School conducted by the teachers who at that time were participating in the project to examine the various ways in which the classroom organization of learning centers was used and to observe the other aspects of the project as they were being implemented at that time.
- 3/29/77 Visited selected classrooms in two schools in Urbana, Illinois, to observe the use of learning centers as a method of classroom organization. The schools visited were Leal School and Yankee Ridge School.
- 3/30/77 Attended a meeting of the OLRC Project participating teachers, director and coordinator. This was one of the monthly meetings held by these people to discuss problems, materials to be purchased, prescriptions, and possible help for teachers interested in implementing the centers approach in their classrooms modeled after the OLRC Project method.
- 4/5/77 Visited Mark Twain School for a full day in order to observe different ways in which the OLRC Project was being implemented, and to gather evaluative data from students and teachers.

- 4/11/77 Distributed informal evaluative survey to all teachers participating in the project. These surveys were returned within a week.
- 4/14/77 Attended a workshop in Urbana sponsored by the state gifted program on producing materials for use in centers in preparation for implementing the centers approach to classroom organization in my classroom.
- 4/18/77 Began using learning centers in my room in the structured manner of the OLRC Project for instruction in most subject areas.
- 4/26/77 Attended a workshop in Urbana on the use of learning centers as a method of classroom organization.
- 4/18/77 through 6/10/77 Used learning center structure of classroom organization in own classroom. During this time I consulted many times with the principal as well as other teachers and the project coordinator concerning alternative materials and methods for dealing with children with special needs. ESEA Title IV-C funds were used to purchase some equipment and materials for my centers. The three parent volunteers who had already been coming to my room daily continued to be most useful and cooperative in tutoring, making materials, and checking papers.
- 6/10/77 Met with project coordinator to secure descriptive and evaluative information for writing this field study paper.

III. SELECTED ACTIVITY ANALYSES

As previously stated, the OLRC Project had two tasks: (1) to provide more effective educational service to children with special needs, through systematically training the mainstream teacher to become aware of the totality of a given child and to implement solutions to that child's problems in an ongoing basis, and (2) to provide more efficient delivery of support services to the mainstream teacher in his/her efforts to meet the special needs of exceptional children, whether handicapped or gifted.

General program objectives along with the specific objectives needed to achieve each of them were included in the original proposal and are outlined below in order to give a clearer picture of what was being attempted.

1. To secure the support of the Charleston Unit #1 Board of Education for the Project Optimum Learning in Regular Classrooms.

- By October 15, 1975 Board approval will have been given to submission of a letter of intent to submit Title IV Part C project for funding from I O E.

- By February 18, 1976, Board approval will have been given to submit a Title IV Part C proposal to I O E.

- By May 19, 1976, the district will have received notification of funding for the project.

-By May 19, 1976, representatives of the media will have received a news release announcing the Grant Award and a brief description of the project.

2. To increase community involvement in an active, continuous, and supportive role in the educational process.

-Parents of students identified with special needs will be involved in conferences. Teachers will keep a record of all parent contacts and conferences of identified students.

-During student registration in August, 1976, parents will be given information regarding parent-volunteer work in the school and will be requested to indicate willingness to serve. By September, 1976, a meeting of parent volunteers will be held. Schedules will be posted.

3. To develop an instructional system which accommodates the individual needs of students with varying abilities and handicaps within the regular classroom.

-By February 1, 1977, learning centers will be developed in all participating classrooms and the media center.

-Identification of students:

Physically impaired	September 1
Slow learner	September 15
Learning disabled	October 1
Gifted	October 15
Socially and culturally deprived	November 1

Identification will be assisted by the use of the following tests:

Frostig Developmental Test of Visual Perception
 Goldman-Fristoe-Woodcock Auditory Skills Test Battery
 Slingerland Screening Tests for Identifying Children with
 Specific Language Disability
 Purdue Perceptual Motor Survey

-By January 1, 1977, mainstream teachers with the help of support personnel and project staff will develop an individual prescriptive program for each child identified.

-By February 1, 1977, instructional materials will be provided for all prescriptive programs.

4. To train the mainstream teacher to deliver the bulk of service to all the children within the classroom.

- By June 1, 1976, an awareness session will be held with administrator, special education personnel, and Project FAST personnel.

- By June 15, 1976, the coordinator will be selected by the administration with formal approval of the Board of Education.

- By June 30, 1976, an awareness program will be conducted by the project director for all classroom teachers in the two project centers.

- During July and August the project coordinator will assume the responsibility for the project. Classroom teachers will volunteer to participate in the project, a training session will be conducted in Essexville, Michigan, and a one week training session will be held in Charleston.

- By October 15, 1976, a project program review will be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the project and the needs of the staff.

5. To provide for the mainstream teacher a delivery system of support services to assist with classroom organization, behavior management, identification of learning problems, and implementation of educational prescription.

- Specialists in areas of need will provide regularly scheduled assistance to all mainstream teachers in the classroom.

General student objectives were also formulated and are given here along with the specific objectives needed to carry them out effectively.

1. To improve the academic achievement of students with special needs and abilities.

- For those children who are gifted, they will be identified, a prescriptive program developed, and by June 1, 1977, 80% of them will score in the 75 percentile or above on standardized tests in reading and mathematics.

-For those children who are identified as being learning disabled, a diagnosis will be made, and a prescriptive program developed. By June 1, 1977, 60% of those identified will show a test improvement of 10% in their area of disability.

-Students with other special needs will be identified and prescriptive programs developed and implemented. Greater gains in reading and math will be made in the school year 1976-1977 than in 1975-1976.

2. To help students build a positive self concept.

-By May 1, 1977, student self concept will be in the 5th stanine for 75% of the students on prescriptive programs.

3. To encourage the development of self directed behavior in children identified for the program.

-By May 15, 1977, student behavior will become more self directed for 75% of students identified for the program.

4. To extend the development of self directed student behavior to all students enrolled in the attendance centers and consequently to improve student conduct throughout the school.

-By May 1, 1977, classroom conduct will require less teacher time than in October, 1976, as measured by anecdotal records and subjective judgments.²

When examining the OLRC Project as implemented, several important aspects can be identified. These will be explored in the following pages. They include classroom organization, diagnoses and prescriptions for children with special needs, support personnel, and parent participation, and evaluation.

Classroom organization

In order to provide classroom teachers with the time to diagnose

²Ibid., pp. 18-29.

special needs as well as prescribe and implement teaching strategies for children identified, the learning center approach to classroom organizational structure was used. In this approach students spend at least part of their school day in special areas of the room in what are called learning centers where they participate independently in a large variety of learning activities. These centers include all areas of the school curriculum, and contain activities for children that are intended for large group, small group, or individual work. A large variety of materials is used, and in each center one would likely find worksheets, books, textbooks, AV materials, and many learning games. Centers materials are prepared by teachers and generally include some required work along with a variety of optional activities for children who finish their work early, as well as selected activities for those students with special needs.

Children are grouped according to the discretion of the teacher, and work independently in their centers during specified periods of the day. While the students are working in their assigned centers teachers are involved with a number of activities such as helping an individual child, working with a small group, or observing students identified for prescription. Teachers also use some of this time to prepare their diagnoses of children with special needs and to work individually or in small groups with those children who are on prescriptions.

The learning center approach does not exclude group work in

the classroom. In fact, the entire class becomes involved in establishing rules of conduct and during class meetings discusses what areas have been successfully handled and which need work. Group time is also used when classes are studying a number of subject areas or specific activities which are best suited to this type of work, such as social studies activities, some art activities, music, physical education, and others, depending upon the teacher's and class's preference.

Besides freeing the teacher for work with special children the learning center approach has several other advantages. It provides an opportunity for peer interaction in the instructional process and encourages students to learn from one another. We have long known that a person learns something far better when he/she teaches it to another, and often a child's peers are much better equipped to help on a problem than a teacher is because the child understands more clearly his own peer's difficulties. This approach also encourages children to develop independence in assuming responsibility for part of their own learning as well as helping them learn to manage their own behavior in the classroom. Both of these are very significant gains for students, and result in the development of increased self-confidence on the part of students involved, as well as a measurable decrease in the need for teacher-imposed discipline in the classroom.

As the variety of teaching personalities and styles is endless, so are the possibilities for different uses of learning centers in the

self-contained classroom. In the OLRC Project eight teachers implemented the centers approach in eight different ways. Some used the centers throughout most of the day, some had center times only in the mornings, and in one case only a short period of about twenty minutes a day was used for centers. Those classrooms in which centers were used throughout most of the day came closest to the FAST model, though Project FAST personnel encouraged the OLRC Project teachers to determine their own styles of learning-centered classrooms, since this would be the most productive for them and their students in the long run.

It is important to note that in the learning centers approach students benefit from several kinds of instruction: individual, small group, large group, and whole class. They are given required work as well as alternative assignments so that they learn to make choices, and they are required to take a great deal of responsibility for their own learning. The centers provide an ideal vehicle for individualizing instruction as well as a classroom structure which enables teachers to give special time to special children without interrupting the flow of classroom activity or separating these special children from their peers.

Diagnoses and prescriptions for children with special needs

One important belief of the designers of the OLRC Project is that classroom teachers, with the help of outside expertise, can be

trained to diagnose special needs as well as prescribe learning strategies to effectively fulfill these needs. During the first part of the 1976-77 school year several inservice workshops were held for the OLRC Project staff by learning disabilities experts as well as resource people from Project FAST which concentrated upon helping teachers increase their abilities to systematically observe children, to diagnose individual student needs, and later to design individual prescriptive activities to provide for these needs. Emphasis was on identifying and providing for the gifted; the visually, auditorially, and motorically disabled; and the slow learner.

In the actual classroom, identification and diagnosing special needs was the first step. Initial identification came from teacher observation. Once a potential student was identified, teachers used part or all of a series of elaborate checklists provided by Project FAST to systematically observe and document student behaviors that were present in the classroom. These checklists included the following:

- Auditory Checklist
- Basic Arithmetic Checklist
- Developmental Checklist
- Reading Checklist
- Movement Checklist
- Language Checklist
- Emotional Development Checklist
- Thinking Skills Checklist
- Visual Checklist

Often the teacher began using one checklist and the results of that survey indicated another checklist that would be helpful in the diagnosing process.

After teacher observations were complete, screening and testing

were carried out, generally by the learning disabilities teachers or the project coordinator. A number of tests were used, some of which were the Frostig Developmental Test of Visual Perception, the Goldman-Fristoe-Woodcock Auditory Skills Test Battery, the Slingerland Screening Tests for Identifying Children with Specific Language Disability, and the Purdue Perceptual Motor Survey.

Following the testing process a conference was held with the project coordinator, the classroom teacher, the learning disabilities teachers, and any other specialists involved in the screening process. Together these professionals were able to fairly closely diagnose the children's needs. A second conference was then held which included these same people as well as the parents of the individual child being considered. The purpose of this second conference was to include the parents in the entire diagnosing and prescriptive process so that they could become aware of test and observation results as well as to give them an opportunity to add input when possible that might help in providing for the child's needs. If the conclusion gathered by these meetings was that the OLRC methods could help the child, a prescription for that child was written.

A child was "put on prescription" through the efforts of the classroom teacher who sought additional expertise from whatever support people could best help in any given case. A folder was prepared for the student which included a special form that was filled out by the

teacher and support personnel. The first entry included the child's strengths and a listing of concerns that the teacher had about the child. These concerns were already evident from the observations and testing done previously. Following this, specific behavioral objectives were listed after which was prepared a section on methods of implementation. The sections on objectives and methods were crucial since they were the actual prescription itself, and so they required quite a bit of thought and preparation on the part of the teachers involved. For resources to determine possible methods, teachers tried to explore first whatever processes and materials with which they were already familiar as a base. This gave some degree of security at the start. Other activities and materials came from the Information Bank, which is a large resource available from Project FAST that describes multiple possibilities for helping children with almost any special need. Still further input was secured through other teachers and resource people available at the time. The last column on the prescription sheet was called "outcomes," and it was here that teachers noted at least weekly whatever results they observed in their daily contact with the student. It was important that unfavorable as well as favorable outcomes be noted since all of these were important in further prescribing strategies for the child. During the course of the year the methods might be changed in order to add new possibilities for helping the student and it was even possible that some of the objectives might be altered as well as the year

passed. In any case, the teachers' responsibilities here were sizeable since they had to continually observe and note changes, as well as continually add new strategies and change techniques in order to more effectively help their special students.

It is the prescription aspect of the entire project that the OLRC Project personnel found the most difficult. Actual implementation for this part was not expected until March, and at that time a number of prescriptions were being written and carried out. During the year, however, the participating teachers found that the time involved in the elaborate paperwork of recording methods and observations was prohibitive because of the energy their usual teaching responsibilities required and because they were also in the process of redefining their classroom structure into the centers approach. In the words of the program coordinator, "Practically speaking, it's very, very difficult for the classroom teacher to find the time to do all of these things." Most teachers, however, agreed that in another year, once their centers were better organized and they had been able to produce adequate materials for the centers, they would be in a much better position to carry out the full prescriptive process in the manner in which it was intended to be used.

Support personnel

General program objective #5 indicates that mainstream teachers would receive the support assistance needed for help in classroom or-

ganization, behavior management, identification of learning problems, and the implementation of educational prescriptions. In order to provide this assistance a project coordinator was hired with ESEA Title IV Part C funds whose background of expertise included a great deal of work with special education and learning disabilities problems. In addition to her, two half time learning disabilities teachers were employed an additional one-fourth time so that they could work with teachers diagnosing needs and preparing prescriptive programs. A number of other professional people contributed significantly to the OLRC Project, including the school psychologist, who was intermittently available for consultation or for special testing. Regularly scheduled assistance came from the Coles County Mental Health Center for one family during the last two months of school. The program coordinator for the Eastern Illinois Area Special Education Office was available for consultation whenever the need arose. A representative from the Illinois Gifted Program gave guidance and suggestions in the identification of gifted children, and the prescribing of learning strategies for them. Representatives from Project FAST were always available by phone, and also gave a two day workshop during the year for the OLRC Project staff. The principal of the two buildings, who was the project's director, also gave assistance in any area needed as well as providing leadership, direction, and encouragement to the project staff.

The functions of the support people were as follows:

1. To observe and diagnose students.
2. To prescribe student programs for individual student needs.
3. To provide support to the classroom teacher in the development of teacher tools.
4. To provide materials, activities, games, books, and ideas to assist in solving classroom concerns.
5. To provide inservice education for individual and group staffs.
6. To assist teachers in developing a strength and weakness profile.
7. To assist in developing prescriptive programs for individual students within the classroom environment.

The support people served in different capacities, depending upon their expertise and the needs the teachers had for them. Some worked directly with students, individually or in small groups, either inside the classroom or in other areas of the school building when necessary. At other times they provided consultative services for teachers, sometimes actually in the classrooms and other times in conferences with teachers before and after student school hours. In any case their assistance provided much needed added skill to teachers attempting to implement the project. During the year their training and techniques could be shared so that not only a few students could benefit from their services, but all children in the project classrooms at one time or another were able to gain from the special expertise of these people.

Parent participation

One of the major objectives of the project was to increase community involvement in an active, continuous, and supportive role in the educational process. Two major methods of achieving parent participation in the schools were used. The first was that of including parents in the conferences held for students identified with special needs. The second was that of soliciting and using parent help for volunteer work in the school building.

At least two parent-teacher-support person conferences were held in each case where a child with special needs was identified. During these conferences, information regarding prescription goals and methods, as well as home activities were stressed so that the parents of the child could participate actively in the special help their child was getting from the OLRC Project. This encouraged active home support for the educational process as well as fostering a positive attitude on the part of parents concerning efforts being made in the schools for helping children learn.

Parent volunteer assistance was solicited at registration time, and as a result, seventeen volunteers were scheduled to help in the school. A second letter inviting additional parent participation was sent out later in the year which added another six people to the volunteer list.

These parents were scheduled into the school day and worked in

a variety of capacities to support the OLRC Project. Some were used as tutors either in the classroom or in other areas of the school building. These tutors generally came at least twice a week for an hour or more. Others assisted as teacher's aides, working directly with students in the room or in other ways such as checking papers, etc. Still others provided invaluable assistance in producing materials which teachers requested for teaching specific concepts. Such materials consisted mainly of dittos, worksheets, and especially learning games. Since all of the OLRC teachers used centers in their rooms it was essential that these centers have a large variety of alternative activities for students to use. Parent volunteers provided much of this very essential assistance and as a result of their work over 300 learning games were completed for use in classrooms to provide reinforcement and enrichment.

Evaluation

At the end of the school year a formal evaluation of the OLRC Project was prepared by the project coordinator. This evaluation consisted of a listing of project objectives and the year's outcomes. Much of this information included in that evaluation is contained at different points in this paper. However, a copy of it is also included as Appendix A.

In attempting to evaluate the OLRC Project based upon participating teacher and student reaction, the writer solicited comments

from both in written form. The response to the project was very favorable on the part of both students and teachers.

Students were asked the questions, "What do you think of the way your room is now--with the class working in centers during the day," and "Can you compare the centers organization with the way your room was before (or last year)?" Students were asked for oral or written responses, depending upon the class. At least five students from each participating class were asked these questions. A representative selection of their reactions follows.

-It's fun.

-I like some centers more than others.

-We do more work here.

-You get to do lots of different things in one day.

-I especially like the games.

-I like all the centers and math the best.

-I like the centers because when you are done with your paper you can play a game.

-I like the centers because there's always something to do.

-I don't like the centers because if you're in a group you can learn songs.

-I like the centers because you meet different people.

-I think the centers are just the way I like them. The work is fun except it is very hard.

-When you need help there is always someone to help you and if nobody can help you there is always the teacher.

- I think I like having the centers better than just having plain old spelling and reading and all that stuff because in the centers it's all much more fun than sitting around with a spelling book.
- I like having centers better than having class the other way. I like it better because it is more fun because you're sure to have someone in your group that you like. And it is easier.
- I like the new way best because we can work ahead and it's fun for us kids.
- I like the centers better because we don't all have to do the same thing at one time and I think we are more quiet this way.
- I think it is more fun than the plain old work, work, work. Why now it's work, fun, work, fun.
- I like the centers because everything we do is fun. Even though we are working it seems like we are not working at all. But we are learning.
- I like the centers because they are fun to work in. The people in my center are nice.

Teacher comments were solicited by a form which they filled out. It included five questions. All responses are included below except those that duplicate previous statements.

1. What are your feelings about the Title IV-C project as you have implemented it this year? (centers, parent volunteers, prescriptions, etc.)

Centers: -It is now possible for control of activity within the freedom of choice on the part of the student.

-Working individually and in small groups is possible and enjoyable.

-Knowing children's strengths and weaknesses is greatly improved due to variety of exposure and working individually.

-Pleased with the structured organization.

- I think it is a much better way of using centers in comparison with the way in which I used them last year.
- I feel the students are gaining more and I am able to see more precisely exactly what each student is doing.
- The project has been modified in my room; I could not make a complete change in my teaching.
- It requires a great deal of preplanning.
- It takes more planning time but the smoothness with which the day progresses offsets the added work.
- In the beginning I had reservations; now I enjoy working in the program.
- They provide students with activities at varying levels of difficulty and complexity.
- Learning centers provide the opportunity for more self directed learning.
- The structure allows me to have more feedback as to the students' actual performance.
- Provides an opportunity for children to work with other children during a day.

Parents: -Without them it wouldn't have been possible to provide near as many activities for the centers.

- Parent volunteers make the centers possible.
- Parent involvement has been an asset.

-Some parents work successfully with children and others cannot.

Prescriptions:

- Another year is needed to really concentrate on learning how to do them and for feeling confident in doing so.
- I have been slow with prescriptions, but they are valuable.
- I'm not completely sold on the idea of prescriptions as they involve lots of time and record keeping which take away from planning time.

3. How has your implementation of this project changed your classroom?

- I now use centers in a more structured way.
- Centers are larger and many more materials are available to children.
- Children are independent. They are learning a sense of responsibility for their actions. They have very little difficulty keeping busy with meaningful tasks.
- Classroom is better organized.
- The children are more able to follow directions.
- Usually there are few discipline problems.
- I know where my children need help instantly and can give individual attention when needed.
- It has made our classroom more alive.
- Changing centers materials often keeps the children's enthusiasm high.

3. What are some of the problems you have had with this project?

- Keeping small children within the confines of a single center until they have learned the rules.
- Physical organization.
- Demand on teacher planning time is extremely high.
- Funding for the project is for one year only. Our teachers need another year with support services before it would be fair to expect them to become responsible to other schools in a dissemination situation.
- I don't feel really comfortable yet in writing prescriptions.
- Keeping papers graded.
- Prescriptions!

4. How have your students reacted to the change in classroom organization?

- Because my students began the year in a learning centered classroom, I don't feel that they have been aware of a specific change.
- They enjoy the freedom of choice and the variety of activities.
- They all like the centers and don't realize how much work they are accomplishing each day. There is seldom any negative reaction.
- They love the centers and look forward to them.
- At first it was difficult for them to get used to using "quiet voices" and cleaning up properly.
- They are proud of the variety of their accomplishments.
- They are more helpful to each other and responsible for center materials.

5. What reactions have you had from parents?

- That their children enjoy school and are learning.
- One parent took the idea back to her Head Start room.
- They are impressed with finding out there are so many ways to reinforce one concept.
- By participating in the volunteer program they have realized how much time is involved in making learning materials; they are more appreciative of their child's teacher and her time.
- They like to see activities for individual needs being provided.
- They are amazed at how much the children have learned with so many in the class. I feel the centers have greatly contributed to this.
- Most parents like the center idea but many can see it working successfully on at kindergarten level. I can see that it could work beautifully at all levels, even through high school!

- Parents seem to be in favor as the children are happy and it has been explained that they are not really just playing, but are working on a specific concept.
- They are happy with the delight their children express.
- There are a few who feel that children are "playing" and favor a more traditional approach. These few are also parents who never quite find time to come in and visit our classroom.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

In conducting this field study project the writer had two purposes in mind in exploring the OLRC Project: (1) to determine whether or not the basic elements of the project could be easily adapted to an intermediate classroom (since all actively participating teachers were primary grade teachers), and (2) to determine what parts of the project could be applied without extra funding in other school buildings.

In pursuing the first objective I chose to implement the classroom organization methods of the project--the learning center approach--in my own fourth grade room. This was done after attending several workshops and spending two visitation days in Mark Twain School and some Urbana schools, along with continued consultation with the OLRC project coordinator. I found the initial effort to be great, and spent many many hours of preparation before making this change in my room. The results were absolutely fantastic! I found that all of my students were very happy with the change, they worked harder than ever before, required classroom discipline became minimal, and the reactions I received from parents were very positive.

It seems to me that the higher the grade level the more advantageous this type of organization can be. This is true because of the

positive effect it has on discipline, which generally becomes a greater concern as children get older, as well as the fact that students can work more independently as they achieve greater reading, writing, and math skills. They are able to read directions and actually require less teacher direction anyway. I also feel that students work harder and learn more when they are self-directed rather than teacher-directed. This definitely showed itself to be true in my room.

The centers approach gave me the opportunity for individualizing more than I was able to before. It also gave me time to work with several students who were learning disabled and slow learners (upper level of EMH) who otherwise would not have received as much special attention.

The changeover of classroom organization to learning centers provided some special challenges. For one, I had to make a large number of games very quickly in order to have enough for my centers. The OLRC Project secretary helped greatly here. Also there was the problem of organizing subject matter so that students could do their work independently, and finding enough materials to teach essential concepts in the centers. This took extra time and money because I chose to purchase a number of new resources such as task cards and activity books for duplication. Along with my own purchases OLRC Project funds were provided to acquire some additional resources which helped a great deal. Much of the rest of the extra time was

spent in organizing the room, providing spaces for all work and materials, and preparing the centers themselves. Checking student progress for evaluation is a special project in itself, and is very time consuming. It must be done regularly so that the teacher can remain aware of exactly where each child is at any given time. During the year I was fortunate enough to have three volunteer parents who came several times a week to help with our individualized spelling and math programs. These parents continued to be faithful in attendance and provided much needed assistance in checking papers as well as tutoring special students and making learning games for the centers.

In attempting to determine which parts of the OLRC Project can easily be used in other school buildings, it would be advantageous to examine each of the major aspects of the program with this objective in mind.

Classroom organization. --Based upon my own experiences with changing my classroom over to the centers approach I would recommend highly that other teachers use it as well. The initial outlay of time involved is minimal when compared to the benefits. I am fairly well convinced that this conversion can be made with very little, if any, extra financial assistance. Most schools have enough available in the way of AV hardware and software, reproducible materials, and resource books. Also, many learning games and worksheets can be very inexpensively produced and the ideas for these can come directly from

professional magazines and books available in most school buildings and some libraries.

The advantages of this approach are several:

1. It frees the teacher to work with children with special problems.
2. It develops responsibility on the part of the child for his own behavior.
3. It develops in the child an independence from the teacher.
4. It encourages students to become responsible for their own learning.
5. It provides an opportunity for students to work with each other and gain from one another's experiences.
6. It decreases discipline problems in the classroom.
7. The teacher does much less directing and much more guiding so that he/she can become a true facilitator of learning.

This is indeed an impressive list. It should provide incentive for anyone wishing to make a change in his/her classroom.

Diagnoses and prescriptions for children with special needs. --

As noted previously, this aspect of the OLRC Project was the most difficult to implement, mainly because of the time it required on the part of the classroom teacher. In theory it is a very good approach, and those who have used it have had much success with it. My recommendation would be that this method could most easily be used in buildings that have adequate support personnel, because these people with special expertise are so essential for training teachers and for helping

them diagnose and prescribe for children with special needs.

The checklists used by the OLRC Project staff which came from Project FAST can be very useful in helping teachers systematically observe children. Such tools are a real asset in diagnostic work. Also, the standardized tests used by the support people are nearly essential since they can pinpoint special areas of strength and weakness, and thus provide data essential for diagnosing.

Regardless of whether or not these are the actual tools used, however, I feel that specialists trained to work with children with special needs can provide invaluable assistance to teachers willing to work with these children in a systematic organized fashion so that their specific needs are met by their learning experiences.

There is no doubt that the diagnostic and prescriptive process used in this project is a useful one, and that it can be used by other schools as well. The essential ingredients for such implementation would have to be specialists trained for working with special children, and teachers who are willing to spend the extra time required for dealing with these children in the classroom itself.

Support personnel. --Comments made previously establish my position regarding support personnel in the schools. State law requires that children with special problems are provided the special help they need in the educative process. Implementing the OLRC Project's methods would require that these highly trained people work

closely with classroom teachers in order to provide for the children in question directly in the classroom instead of removing them from the regular classroom environment, which is the common practice. It is the belief of the OLRC Project staff that such students benefit much more from getting special help while still operating with their peers rather than by being separated out for special classes or sessions only. The project has definitely had good results from this approach.

Parent participation. -- Much has been written concerning the need to further involve parents in the educative process. The OLRC Project has made some very positive steps in this direction. By including parents in the diagnostic and prescriptive process, the staff has gained a great deal of support and encouragement from parents who might otherwise have had very negative feelings since their children have special needs that sometimes are not met by the regular school program.

Secondly, by encouraging parents to share their own expertise in tutoring, participating in classroom activities along with teachers, and in preparing materials that their children will actually be using in the classrooms, this project has further developed a support base in the community, and at the same time has added special resources to the existing educational program that might not have been otherwise available.

Application of this aspect of the project can be done in any

building at any educational level. The requirements are leadership and coordination on the part of the administration, and a willingness on the part of the classroom teachers to share the domain of their classrooms with their students' parents. The time involved is not great, and the benefits can be multiple, both in public relations and in adding a new and special dimension to the school's program.

Conclusion. --The Optimum Learning in Regular Classrooms Project has encouraged a number of teachers in the Charleston Unit District #1 to make some major changes in their classrooms. It has helped these teachers increase their own abilities to identify and help students with special needs, and has made excellent use of well-trained support personnel in this process. It has achieved its own objectives, and has had some positive effects on teachers not initially in the project by encouraging them to make the changes and gains made by the original staff. Its various aspects have been well implemented, and each can easily show its applicability to other buildings. Hopefully, other area teachers and administrators will look to this project for leadership and attempt to apply at least some of its positive aspects in their own schools.

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APPENDIX A

**OPTIMUM LEARNING IN REGULAR
CLASSROOMS EVALUATION**

Charleston Community Unit District #1

Contact Person:

**June Bouknight
Assistant Superintendent
Personnel and Instruction**

**410 West Polk Avenue
Charleston, Illinois**

(217-345-2106)

GENERAL PROGRAM OBJECTIVE #1

To secure the support of the Charleston Unit #1 Board of Education for the Project Optimum Learning in Regular Classrooms.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

By October 15, 1975 Board approval will have been given to submission of a letter of intent to submit Title IV Part C, project for funding from I O E.

OUTCOME:

Board minutes for October 15, 1975 reflect approval of letter and recommendation for transmission to the I O E.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

By February 18, 1976, Board approval will have been given to submit a Title IV Part C, proposal to I O E.

OUTCOME

Board minutes for February 18, 1976 reflect approval of the proposal and recommendation for transmission to the I O E.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

By May 19, 1976, the district will have received notification of funding for the project.

OUTCOME:

On June 4, 1976, district administrators went to Springfield to negotiate the budget with Title IV officials.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

By May 19, 1976, representatives of the media will have received a news release announcing the Grant Award and a brief description of the project.

OUTCOME

Articles in the Project File are:

2/19/76	School District Seek Grant
8/11/76	Grants Finance Programs In Prescriptive Learning
8/11/76	Mrs. Bouknight Will Serve As Coordinator Of All Federal Title Programs
11/17/76	Parents Volunteer At School
4/29/77	Learning Games Display Share Ideas, Materials

GENERAL PROGRAM OBJECTIVE #2

To increase community involvement in an active, continuous, and supportive role in the educational process.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Parents of students identified with special needs will be involved in conferences.

Teachers will keep a record of all parent contacts and conferences of identified students.

OUTCOME

In the project files are duplicated reports of all parent conferences held. For each identified student, there were at least two conferences. During these conferences information regarding prescription goals and methods, as well as home activities was stressed.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

During student registration in August, 1976, parents will be given information regarding parent-volunteer work in the school and will be requested to indicate willingness to serve.

By September 15, 1976, a meeting of parent volunteers will be held. Schedules will be posted.

OUTCOME

Twenty-seven parent volunteer forms were returned after the initial contact made during student registration. These people were then invited to a meeting held on September 15, 1976. During this meeting the different areas in which we needed volunteers were explained. There also was a materials display to show the type of learning games that might be requested. At the end of the meeting ten parents signed up for classroom volunteer work, and 7 people volunteered to help make learning materials.

As a result of this meeting, schedules were prepared and posted, and the parent volunteers contacted one more time.

The retired Teachers' Association was also approached on September 14, 1976 as a possible source of volunteer help. Results were not encouraging.

During the October P.T.A. meeting, the Project Coordinator again explained the volunteer program and its purpose and accomplishments to date in an effort to gain more support and volunteers.

In February of 1977, one more letter was sent home describing the ever-increasing need for volunteers. This time six forms were returned. They were given assignments according to their interests and available time.

All response forms, schedules, and copies of letters are in the project files.

As a result of this volunteer program, over 300 learning games have been completed and are in use in the classrooms, providing reinforcement and enrichment.

Also, a Make-It, Take-It, Use It Session was sponsored for the entire district on April 28, 1977. Over 25 teachers attended the session to gather ideas for reinforcement, enrichment, and motivation from the materials made by the parent volunteer group.

In March of 1977, an inservice workshop was held for all substitute teachers and non-participating teachers in the two target schools. The purpose of this workshop was to explain project "Optimum Learning In Regular Classrooms" in general and then have each individual teacher explain her own classroom organization.

A copy of the instrument used to determine the effectiveness of this workshop is included next in the evaluation. Instruments completed and returned have been placed in the project file.

GENERAL PROGRAM OBJECTIVE #3

To develop an instructional system which accommodates the individual needs of students with varying abilities and handicaps within the regular classroom.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

By February 1, 1977, learning centers will be developed in all participating classrooms and the media center.

OUTCOME:

By organizing their classrooms into centers, the teachers made available at least one free center time during which they could observe the children and administer appropriate screenings. This led to the official student identification.

At this point an information sheet containing a first grade's comments about centers is included. The information was gathered for an inservice workshop held in March, 1977.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

Identification of Students:

Physically Impaired	September 1
Slow Learner	September 15
Learning Disabilities	October 1
Gifted	October 15
Socially & Culturally Deprived	November 1

Identification will be assisted by the use of the following tests:

Frostig Developmental Test of Visual Perception
Goldman - Fristoe - Woodcock Auditory Skills Test Battery
Slingerland Screening Tests for Identifying Children
with Specific Language Disability
Purdue Perceptual Motor Survey

OUTCOME:

After teachers identified potential special needs, they referred the student to the learning disabilities support person who administered the appropriate tests from the list above. The results were discussed in a teacher/support person conference, and correct classroom procedures were implemented.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

By January 1, 1977, mainstream teachers with the help of support personnel and project staff will develop an individual prescriptive program for each child identified.

Beginning in August teachers who volunteered to participate in the program were involved in a training program to prepare them for developing individual prescriptions.

- a. During a four day workshop in Michigan with the adopter school, their personnel gave many suggestions, as well as did Dr. and Mrs. Rappaport.
- b. During a four-day workshop in August, 1977, one day was devoted to each area: visual, auditory, motor, gifted, and the slow learner.
- c. As needs arose, small portions of the monthly meetings were spent in sharing needed information.
- d. On a daily basis, both in and out of the classroom, support and project personnel were available to deal with concerns.

Through use of a combination of these services available, mainstream teachers wrote and implemented individual prescriptions. A copy of each prescription is in the project files.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:.

By February 1, 1977, instructional materials will be provided for all prescriptive programs.

OUTCOME:

Proper instructional materials were usually placed within the centers. When the student reached that center, he knew that he was to do his "special" assignment first. Often there were others who reached that center at the same time who could benefit from the same kind of prescriptive work, so they were also permitted to do it.

Throughout the year the classroom teachers discovered that some materials one teacher might use in prescriptive work, another teacher's class might benefit from using developmentally.

All teachers did use specifically selected materials and/or methods for their prescriptive students.

GENERAL PROGRAM OBJECTIVE #4

To train the mainstream teacher to deliver the bulk of service to all the children within the classroom.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

By June 1, 1976 an awareness session will be held with administrator, special education personnel, and project FAST personnel.

OUTCOME:

An awareness session was held at the Administration Building on June 3, 1977. All teachers from the two target schools were present. Project FAST personnel were not present.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

By June 15, 1976, the Coordinator will be selected by the administration with formal approval of the Board of Education.

OUTCOME:

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting of June 16, 1976 show approval of the selection of the Coordinator.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

By June 30, 1976, an awareness program will be conducted by the Project Director for all classroom teachers in the two project attendance centers.

OUTCOME:

A second awareness session was held on June 29, 1976 with all teachers in the two centers invited. In the invitation, copies of the project's objectives and procedures were included. During the program all aspects of the project were discussed in order to help the teachers decide if they wished to participate.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

During July and August the project coordinator will assume the responsibility for the project. Classroom teachers will volunteer to participate in the project, a training session will be conducted in Essexville, Michigan, and a one-week training session will be held in Charleston.

OUTCOME:

Each classroom teacher was contacted to make an individual appointment to view and discuss a film made in Essexville, Michigan, which explained the project. After these sessions eight classroom teachers volunteered for the project. There were 3 kindergarten teachers, two first grade teachers, two second grade teachers, and one fourth grade teacher.

In August, seven personnel, four classroom teachers, two learning disability support people, and the project coordinator attended a four-day workshop in Essexville, Michigan. Upon returning home all project personnel were involved in a four-day workshop in Charleston. Areas stressed were the actual setting up of centers within the classrooms, scheduling, behavior management, providing appropriate materials within the centers, identifying and providing for the gifted, visually, auditorially, motorically disabled, and the slow learner.

Information stressed during the workshop, and teacher evaluation forms are located within the project files.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

By October 15, 1976, a Project Program Review will be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the project and the needs of the staff.

OUTCOME:

During October, 1976, the project coordinator developed a survey instrument and administered it to all the teachers and support personnel in the project. Children were not given the survey instrument since there were no participating third grade classrooms in the project, and the fourth grade teacher had not yet implemented centers, nor made any definite identification of students. It was also felt that the parents involved in the project were just then beginning towards gaining some understanding of the project, and it was not fair to ask them yet for an evaluation.

The results of this survey instrument were used in a progress report to the Board of Education on December 15, 1976.

Also, the results served as a guide to teacher needs. Individualized teacher conferences were used to satisfy some of those needs, and portions of monthly meetings were used for the same purpose.

The completed forms, the tabulated results, and a copy of the report to the Board of Education are in the project files.

A copy of the survey instrument, results, and Board of Education report are included in this evaluation.

TITLE IV/Part C, ESEA REPORT

TO: Board of Education, Community Unit District #1
Charleston, Illinois

Date: December 15, 1976

The name of our project is Optimal Learning in Regular Classrooms. It is often referred to as the Title IV Project, but that is only the source of our funds. Also, we want to stress the idea that contrary to what has lately been published in the newspaper, only a part of our program deals with learning disabilities. We are equally concerned about the gifted child, the slow learner, the hyperactive, the physically impaired, and the emotionally impaired child.

We feel that we have a program that has many important areas.

1. Stresses organizing learning centers in the classrooms. In August in workshops, Mrs. Bouknight explained, we studied about the center approach; the advantages and disadvantages, and each teacher decided how she felt it would be best for her room to use them. The result was that we have 8 teachers in the project and we basically have 8 different implementation methods. Some teachers use the center approach most of the day, some half/day, and some for an hour. The centers include all the areas of regular instruction and the activities are designed to reinforce concepts being taught. Also, if a child has a special need, this is usually the place the teacher can provide for it. There may be an activity center for only one child, or a small group of children.
2. It is each student's responsibility to do the assigned work and then to use the extra time on the reinforcement activities. So, our children are getting large group instruction, small group instruction, and individual instruction through this organized plan. Also, you have probably noticed that in order to have productive learning, this must be a highly structured sort of organization. Students learn to manage their own behavior and assume responsibility for part of their learning.
3. Another important part of the project is for the teachers to develop more effective methods of observing children. In our inservice meeting we have dealt with this area and also have many materials from our adopter school in Michigan to assist us in this process.
4. Not only do the teachers have a more systematic way of observing children, but then using these tools and skills, they are diagnosing individual student needs.

5. Then after diagnosing, a very important part is the writing of individual prescriptions to actually provide for these needs.

Now we certainly don't feel that this is the only effective means of teaching, but it is apparently working for us.

Other assets of the project include:

1. Organization of a parent-volunteer group:

Greenwold	Speer
Wright	Mattis
Linn	Licht
Konstantinos	

These people have spent many hours not only making materials the teachers have requested, but also some of our classrooms have mother-volunteers that come to the rooms to work with children. In the hall we have a display of some of the materials our parents have made.

2. Use of Support People:

Our support people are our learning disability teachers. With Title IV funds they have been hired an extra ^{1/2} time to work with the teachers in diagnosing needs and preparing prescriptive programs. Now instead of being limited to serving only 10 children, they have the possibility of reaching every child in each room. Also, their training and techniques can be shared so not only is their work remedial, but now it can become developmental through cooperation with the classroom teacher. Also, the state is leaning towards "least restrictive placement". This type of approach to the ^{entire line} program can be the answer.

3. Understanding and Cooperation of Parents:

Another important part is the increased understanding and cooperation of parents involved in the diagnosis and prescriptive stages through parent conferences and when there exists possible carry-over of activities to the home.

A project like this is difficult to implement. There ^{are} ~~is~~ an untold number of hours of planning for the teachers involved. It's challenging and we are still learning.

I would now like to show you a few slides of our classrooms to help give you a better understanding of our project.

AGENDA FOR REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 15, 1976
AT MARK TWAIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - 7:30 P.M. *

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call
- II. Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of November 17, 1976 and Minutes of Adjourned Meeting of December 1, 1976
- III. Receive Visitors and Written Communications
- IV. Financial Reports
 - A. Bills & Payroll for Community Unit #1
 - B. Cooperative Film Library
 - C. Activity Fund Reports for Junior and Senior High Schools
 - D. Profit and Loss Report - Unit Lunch Program
- V. Old Business
 - A. Unteed Associates, Ltd.
 - B. Driver Education
 - C. Charleston Holiday Tournament
 - D.
- VI. New Business
 - A. Title IV/Part C, ESEA Report
 - B. Each One Teach One - League of Women Voters
 - C. Resignation
 - D. Leave of Absence
 - E. Employment
 - F. Task Force Report
 - G. Bond & Interest Fund - Extension of Taxes
 - H.
- VII. Good of School Corporation
- VIII. Adjournment

GENERAL PROGRAM OBJECTIVE #5

To provide for the mainstream teacher a delivery system of support services to assist with classroom organization, behavior management, identification of learning problems, and implementation of educational prescription.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

Specialists in areas of need will provide regularly scheduled assistance to all mainstream teachers in the classroom.

OUTCOME:

Most of the assistance and support for the mainstream teacher came from learning disability support people and the project coordinator. Beginning in September, 1976, the learning disability people had regularly scheduled times when they were either in the classrooms or were available for consultation. The coordinator also had regularly scheduled times to be in the classrooms, in addition to being available at all times for any assistance needed.

Other support services came from the school psychologist, who was intermittently available for consultation or for special testing. Regularly scheduled assistance came from the Coles County Mental Health for one family during the last two months of school. The program coordinator of the Eastern Illinois Area Special Education Office was available to us for consultation whenever the need arose. A representative from the Illinois Gifted Program came several times to give guidance and suggestions in the identification of, and providing materials for gifted children. Representatives from Project FAST were as close as a telephone or post office whenever a need arose. Also, they came for a two-day workshop with the project staff.

GENERAL STUDENT OBJECTIVE #1

To improve the academic achievement of students with special needs and abilities.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

For those children who are gifted, they will be identified, a prescriptive program developed, and by June 1, 1977, 80% of them will score in the 75% percentile or above on standardized tests in reading and mathematics.

OUTCOME:

Two first grade students were identified as being gifted on the basis of SRA Achievement composit score being at least one year above grade level, a teacher evaluation score, and an STEA score of 120 or above.

A copy of the prescriptive programs which were developed are in the project files. Using the SRA Achievement Tests in reading and mathematics as post-tests, one identified student at the 1.9 grade placement earned the following scores:

Reading Composit - 99 percentile

Math Composite - 99 percentile

Based on this information, at least 80% of the students identified as gifted did score in the 75 percentile or above.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

For those children who are identified as being learning disabled, a diagnosis will be made, and a prescriptive program developed. By June 1, 1977, 60% of those identified will show a test improvement of 10% in their area of disability.

OUTCOME:

Seven children were identified as having learning disabilities. Tests that were listed in the proposal, plus additional supplementary tests were used in the diagnosis along with teacher informal-screening and observations. Copies of all prescriptive programs are in the project files.

Included next in this report is a detailed summary of each identified child's concerns, pre and post test scores, and narrative outcomes. A summary of these reports show that 71% of the identified learning disability students showed an overall gain of more than 60% in their area of disability.

As can be noted in the individual summary reports, it is possible to report compared gains for the school years of 1975-1976 and 1976-1977 for only those fourth grade students identified. There were no third grade classrooms in the project, and scores for the second graders would have to go back to the Spring they were in kindergarten. No such scores exist on the SRA Achievement Tests.

KINDERGARTEN STUDENT A

Concerns: fine motor, visual motor, and motivation

Results: Frostig I Eye Motor	+15%
Frostig II Figure Ground	+20%
Frostig III Perceptual Constancy	+30%
Frostig IV Position in Space	-0-
Frostig V Spatial Relations	+25%
Perceptual Quotient	+19%

Supplementary Tests:

ITPA Visual Sequence Memory	+13%
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Although improvements have been made in development of fine motor and visual motor skills, improvement still needs to be made; he is able to visually discriminate objects and lines, and has begun to sequence them appropriately; noticeable improvement in letter-sound recognition skills, uses pencil with much more skill and has improved the way he writes his name and in copying letters and numbers; written or copied figures are located in a more organized and appropriate space on the page - and lines when indicated.

FIRST GRADE STUDENT A

Concerns: Visual discrimination, visual memory, fine motor, reversals.

Results: Frostig I Eye Motor	+ 3%
Frostig II Figure Ground	+50%
Frostig III Perceptual Constancy	+76%
Frostig IV Position in Space	-0-
Frostig V Spatial Relations	+12%
Perceptual Quotient	+30%

Slingerland: line spacing errors, position of space of letters. Position of spacing of letters improved but poor letter formation, improved visual memory for letters, words, and numbers and sequencing.

Supplementary Tests:

ITPA Visual Memory Subtest +12%

Significant improvement has been observed in perceiving objects and lines in relation to each other and himself, letter spacing and formation is improved although skill development is still indicated, reversals less frequent; some improvement has been observed in sight vocabulary although is still working below grade level in this area.

FIRST GRADE STUDENT B

Concerns: Visual discrimination; visual figure ground; visual position-in-space; head tilt; and spacing.

Results:	Frostig I	Eye Motor	+13%
	Frostig II	Figure Ground	+15%
	Frostig IV	Position in Space	+25%
	Slingerland:		+46%

In comparison to September she is having more success in the results of her written work. Spacing is usually good as well as are most letter forms. She doesn't tire as easily from attending to the printed symbol and is able to complete tasks in the same amount of time as the other children.

FIRST GRADE STUDENT C

Concerns: Figure ground, auditory and visual discrimination, auditory in noise, sound blending, alphabet identification.

Slingerland:		+64%
Frostig II	Figure Ground	+30%
Frostig III	Perceptual Constancy	+41%
GFW	Auditory Discrimination Quiet	+17%
GFW	Auditory Discrimination Noise	+50%

GFW Auditory Discrimination	Quiet	-0-
	Fan Noise	+12%
	Cafeteria Noise	+ 6%
	Voice	+ 3%
	TOTAL	<hr/> + 6%

Supplementary:

ITPA Sound Blending Subtest	+35%
Wepman Discrimination	+30%

Now can identify letters in and out of alphabetical sequence; knows consonant sounds and is familiar with words with short vowel sounds; sound blending skills more developed; vowel skills are not developed.

SECOND GRADE STUDENT A

Concerns: Auditory, memory, sound out words.

Test Results:

Slingerland - significant change in auditory and visual sequence visual memory for letters, general attending to task.

Auditory Discrimination: GFW Quiet 30% improvement,
Noise 23% improvement,

Selected Attention GFW

	Quiet	-	same
Fan	Noise	-	+6%
Cafeteria	Noise	-	-15%
	Voice	-	+9%

TOTAL	+88% NO CHANGE
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Frostig: Position in Space	+37%
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Supplementary:

ITPA Auditory Memory Subtest	+ 1%
CA 8-7	4-10 age level on ITPA subtest

Wepman:	Fall - Could not test	40R's
	Post - 9/40 errors; could tolerate	total test administration

He has made significant improvement in attending to auditory stimulation in general; attention span has improved significantly; much improved motivation; is self-correcting sound errors (sound-symbol - printed - reversals, etc.); improved self-confidence; memory for numbers is better than for letters yet.

SECOND GRADE STUDENT B

Concerns: Visual-motor, figure ground, perceptual constancy, position in space; auditory memory; and attention to work completion.

Results:	Frostig	I	Eye Motor	+ 7%
	Frostig	II	Figure Ground	+20%
	Frostig	III	Perceptual Constancy	+24%
	Frostig	IV	Position in Space	+25%
	Frostig	V	Spatial Relations	-13%
			TOTAL	<hr/> 8% CHANGE

Slingerland: inconsistency of upper-levels case usage; position in space of letter; line spacing; improved but yet poor letter formation; perhaps improvement of memory for letters, numbers and sequencing is observed.

Supplementary: ITPA Auditory Memory Subtest -2%

On retest of Frostig - he shows significant improvement in Figure Ground, perceptual constancy and position in space. However - carryover of these skills into academic classroom work is minimal. He continues to be highly variable in application of skills - either already developed or in process of development.

FOURTH GRADE STUDENT A

Concerns: Visual association, reading skills, short vowel rules, math spelling.

Results:

SRA	Total Reading	RS 15	GE 2.1
	Math	RS 8	GE 2.3

Supplementary:

ITPA Visual Association Subtest	+9%
Key Math	+8%

PIAT.....	Math.....5.5
	Reading Recognition.....	3.8
	Reading Comprehension....	3.1
	Spelling.....	2.7
	General Information.....	4.1
		<hr/>
	Total Test.....	3.5

She showed some improvement in visual association skills. She continues to have difficulty with short vowel rules. Minimal change in spelling was observed. Significant improvement in reading recognition and comprehension were shown on PIAT, however, it doesn't appear she's functioning at this grade equivalent. SRA score is more in line with what she reads without being at a frustration level.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

Students with other special needs will be identified and prescriptive programs developed and implemented. Greater gains in reading and math will be made in the school year 1976-1977 than in 1975-1976.

OUTCOME:

There were eight children on prescription who are in this category. The same tests as were listed earlier in the evaluation were administered when appropriate. In addition, other supplementary tests were administered and used in the diagnosis along with teacher informal screening and observations. Copies of all prescriptive programs are in the project files.

Included next are detailed summaries of each identified child's concerns, pre and post test scores, and narrative outcomes. Comparative gains in reading and math can only be given for the fourth grade student for the same reasons as previously stated.

KINDERGARTEN STUDENT #1

Concerns: poor self concept, short attention span and impulsive behavior. Does not think before he acts. Poor auditory memory for instructions. Gross and fine motor control.

RESULTS:

Frostig(no pretest) 33% of total possible score

Purdue Perceptual Motor Survey (no pretest)
59% of total possible score

At the beginning of the year he could not cooperate in a testing situation, could not hold a pencil correctly and consistently made irrelevant remarks during tests. By the end of the year, he used the pencil correctly and was able to stay on task.

He thrives on approval of others, especially adults. He is feeling much better about himself now. He has developed many motor skills both gross and fine, and has gained many pre-reading skills. His impulsive behavior and short attention span are still major difficulties.

KINDERGARTEN STUDENT #2

Concerns: Unable to complete work according to directions, fine motor control, does not have 1 to 1 correspondence, does not recognize letters of alphabet, short attention span.

RESULTS:

Other pretests not administered due to child's inability to cooperate in a testing situation.

Purdue Perceptual Motor Survey:

Scored 64% of total possible points.

Student's short attention span interferes with her progress. She is able to follow one step directions when attending to task. She is able to repeat a given direction and follow it through when attending to task. She is able to color within the lines on large pictures and trace accurately around templates. She is able to name letters of the alphabet by rote in sequence, but not in isolation. She has established 1 to 1 correspondence for numbers one through three.

KINDERGARTEN STUDENT #3

Concerns: listening skills, short attention span, fine motor, self-concept; overall behavior.

RESULTS:

Frostig	I	Eye Motor	+22%
Frostig	II	Figure Ground	-10%
Frostig	III	Perceptual Constancy	-0-
Frostig	IV	Position in Space	-0-
Frostig	V	Spatial Relations	+12%
TOTAL - Perc. Quotient			<hr/> +29%

During Title IV prescriptive work in the LD Classroom, his attention span has increased; follows directions better; remains task oriented in concern areas for longer periods of time; carryover of fine motor skills to writing activities is observed.

FIRST GRADE STUDENT #1

Concerns: Lack of confidence in working independently; skill work done slowly; doesn't use time effectively; highly distractable; gross motor skills need further development.

RESULTS:

Frostig	I	Eye Motor	+21%
Frostig	II	Figure Ground	+20%
Frostig	III	Perceptual Constancy	+14%
Frostig	IV	Position in Space	+ 8%
Frostig	V	Spatial Relations	+ 7%
			<hr/>
TOTAL			+70%

These scores indicate no significant disabilities in the visual and motor areas.

Doesn't require much teacher reinforcement; frustration no longer results in tears, can follow simple auditory directions, less frequent reversals, needs improvement yet in effectiveness of time.

FIRST GRADE STUDENT #2

Concerns: Frequent letter reversals, numbers reversed, speech concern, lacks social and emotional maturity, difficulty following group directions.

RESULTS:

			RAW SCORE
Frostig	I	Eye Motor	+18
Frostig	II	Figure Ground	+19
Frostig	III	Perceptual Constancy	+11
Frostig	IV	Position in Space	+ 8
Frostig	V	Spatial Relations	+ 7
			<hr/>

TOTAL
PERCEPTUAL QUOTIENT +116

These scores indicate no perceptual difficulties at his present age level.

Less frequent reversals, can follow through simple directions; maturity shows progress but still needs more time.

FIRST GRADE STUDENT #3

Concerns: Difficulty recognizing lower case letters; fine motor skills very poorly developed; brief attention span; sequencing numbers; aggressive behavior; use of time constructively; sequencing letters; auditory discrimination difficulties.

Frostig	I	Eye Motor	+ 9%
Frostig	II	Figure Ground	+55%
Frostig	III	Perceptual Constancy	+41%
Frostig	IV	Position in Space	+13%
Frostig	V	Spatial Relations	-0-
TOTAL			<hr/> +26%
GFW Auditory Discrimination			4%

He recognizes upper and lower case letters, fine motor behavior is much improved as evidenced by written work; reading skills are improved; can use phonetic skills to attack new words; improved comprehension and sequencing of events; behavior is less aggressive and deals with problems in a more acceptable manner; sequences numbers to at least 25.

FIRST GRADE STUDENT #4

Concerns: Short attention span; fine motor; manuscript writing; poor letter formation; letter reversals; poor spacing; recall of letter forms.

RESULTS:

Frostig	I	Eye Motor	- 7%
Frostig	II	Figure Ground	+35%
Frostig	III	Perceptual Constancy	+ 8%
Frostig	IV	Position in Space	+12%
Frostig	V	Spatial Relations	-12%

PERCEPTUAL QUOTIENT

+ 2%

GFW Auditory Discrimination

+9%

Supplementary:

Wepman: 5% improvement

She is recognizing consonant sounds and is able to use them in attacking new vocabulary words. Her ability to follow more complicated directions has shown definite improvement. Although improvement has been shown, her academic skills still remain below grade level.

FOURTH GRADE STUDENT #1

Concerns: Fine motor control; disorganized; visual memory; following directions both auditorily and from the printed symbol; self-confidence.

RESULTS:

Slingerland	+18%
1976-1977 SRA Achievement	
Reading	+.4%
Math	+.2%
1975-1976 SRA Achievement	
Reading	+1.3%
Math	+ .4%

This year his learning skills have improved much more than in comparison to his achievement level. He mastered the correct formations for all cursive forms, and consistently recalls them. His written work is now legible, whereas in September, it was not. Fine motor control has improved. Through the use of rhythmical, fine motor exercises, visual memory increased. A negative attitude is much less frequently observed.

GENERAL STUDENT OBJECTIVE #2

To help students build a positive self-concept.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

By May 1, 1977, student self-concept will be in the 5th stanine for 75% of the students on prescriptive programs.

OUTCOME:

Throughout the year the classroom teachers strove to provide an atmosphere of acceptance through the type of classroom discipline and encouragement offered. Class meetings were used to deal with problems of interaction in and out of the classroom. The result of this type of classroom management was an overall positive self-concept for the students on prescription as shown on the test results of the Scamin: Self-Concept and Motivation Inventory

CHART

THE SCAMEN SCORES - MAY, 1977

Kindergarten Form

Self Concept Stanine

5
5
5
3

Early Elementary

Role Expectations and Self-Adequacy = Self-Concept

Stanine

8
6
7
3
6
4
5
8

Stanine

7
5
3
3
5
5
5
5

Later Elementary

Role Expectations and Self-Adequacy = Self-Concept

Stanine

7
2

Stanine

7
4

NOTE: The Scamin does not yield a separate stanine score for self-concept in the early and later elementary forms. Self-Concept is a combination of role expectations and self-adequacy

GENERAL STUDENT OBJECTIVE #3

To encourage the development of self-directed behavior in children identified for the program.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

By May 15, 1977, student behavior will become more self-directed for 75% of students identified for the program.

OUTCOME:

In May of 1977 a survey was completed by each classroom teacher that had children on prescription. The results showed that for 75% or more of the students on prescription:

1. Students are working independently of teacher, less frequently raising hands.
2. Student behavior requires less teacher direction.
3. Student attempts to solve problems on his own.
4. Students rely on other students for information when appropriate.

75% of students on prescription did not achieve:

1. The students are independently checking their own work.
2. Students seek answers from written materials/books when available at their level.

There's a copy of the survey instrument used with the tabulated results. This instrument was used in place of the Behavior Management instrument that was being developed by Project FAST, as we did not receive a copy of their final instrument.

GENERAL STUDENT OBJECTIVE #4

To extend the development of self-directed student behavior to all students enrolled in the attendance centers and consequently to improve student conduct throughout the school.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

By May 1, 1977, classroom conduct will require less teacher time than in October, 1976 as measured by anecdotal records and subjective judgements.

OUTCOME:

To gather this information into one place, a "Survey for Evaluation of Classroom Conduct" was taken in May, 1977. The survey and its results are included on the next page. The results seem to indicate a very definite positive trend.

'During the December, 1976 workshop with the resource people from Essexville, Michigan, the teachers were asked to write what they liked most about the project. Below is a list of their comments.

- 1.The children seem to be using the learning games to a much greater degree.
- 2.The children are learning to be more responsible for own needs and actions.
- 3.I am able to get around to more of the children and see their individual needs.
- 4.Children are involved.....I am involved! Children are doing their thing, not mine.....the end result is not the utmost importance....the means is important.
- 5.Some children have had more learning experiences and have progressed faster...
- 6.Even though I haven't been able to set up centers and passports exactly as they should be, I have found that the pupils enjoy learning much more.
- 7.I have had the opportunity to see children in the classroom setting among his peers.
- 8.Materials are being put to more and better use.
- 9.Quality of centers is much better this year.
- 10.Easier evaluation of individual skills.
- 11.They use their passports well.
- 12.I feel much more organized than last year.
- 13.More Control.
- 14.More individual pupil contact
- 15.Organizing information bank....I feel it can be very helpful to us all.
- 16.Children are becoming more self-reliant.
- 17.More variety to modes of learning.

18.I feel I know more about each child than ever before!

19.The children love the centers.

20.I am able to work with 1-2 children - without being disturbed.

21.Within atmosphere of freedom, children are using a variety of things - productively.